

Announces Two New Caseworkers to Help Constituents Cut Red Tape

Washington, DC - Congressman Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) announced today his office has secured \$614,072 in pay and benefits for veterans in Iowa's First District since January 2009. Braley worked closely with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense to ensure veterans received the paychecks, pension, health and disability and education benefits they earned. Braley's district staff were instrumental in assisting veterans by cutting through bureaucratic red tape and securing the funds.

"There is no higher priority in my office than working to ensure Iowa's veterans and military families receive the pay and benefits they've earned," Braley said. "Since I was elected to Congress, my staff and I have been working hard and getting things done for Iowa's veterans and military families. These benefits are just one example of what happens when our government works on behalf of the American people."

"While most Iowans hear about my office's legislative work, the unsung heroes are my staff in Iowa who work tirelessly to help constituents cut through federal bureaucracy and red tape to receive the benefits they've earned. I'm proud of my staff for securing these funds and I encourage any veteran who needs assistance to call my office."

The \$614,000 announced today does not include the Respite Leave benefits Braley secured for Iowa's National Guardsmen and women who served in the longest deployment since World War II.

Braley also announced the hiring of two new caseworkers, Ardie Blakeney and Beth Chaplin. Both caseworkers have advanced degrees in social work and are well-equipped to help Iowans living in the First District navigate federal agencies.

Ardie Blakeney will assist Braley's office with Department of Defense and Veterans Administration casework in Waterloo. She earned her bachelor's degree in psychology and master's degree in social work from the University of Northern Iowa. Blakeney is originally from New Orleans, Louisiana.

Beth Chaplin will assist Braley's office with Department of State, IRS, and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services casework in his Dubuque office. Chaplin is a Dubuque native and graduate of Loras College. She earned her master's degree in social work from the Jane Addams College of Social Work at University of Illinois Chicago.

For more information about Braley's constituent services, visit <http://Braley.house.gov>.